

A good sign for 2023?

This rainbow was formed by the fine snow particles coming from the snowmaking machines in King George (Murray Hill) Park January 10. They make snow for the toboggan runs. PHOTO: RALPH THOMPSON.

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Tax hike for average single-family dwelling set at 6.4%

City adopts budget of \$130M as local spending rises 12.8%

BY LAUREEN SWEENEY

At a time of rising inflation along with contract and supply costs, city council De-

cember 19 adopted a record-breaking operating budget for 2023 of \$129.54 million, up a total of 9.2 percent.

This is driven by a hike of 12.8 percent in the city's own spending, a rise unknown in recent years and offset by an appropriation from surplus of \$12.5 million.

As a result, the 2023 budget will require a tax *continued on p. 20*

Dodge on December real estate: Are we rounding the bend? See p. 15

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Susan Lloyd (Leduc)

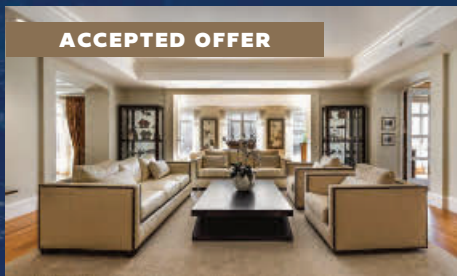
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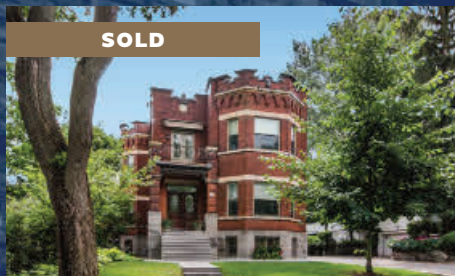
Sir George-Simpson, apt. 8A
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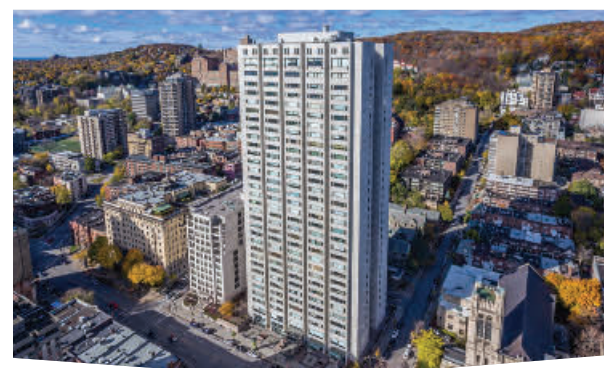
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Car fire on Olivier Ave.



This car caught fire on December 17 on Olivier Ave. PHOTO COURTESY OF KAL STERLINE.

Dog pinned to front bumper

A Westmount resident noticed a dead dog attached to the front bumper of a black F-150 pick-up truck parked on Abbott near St. Catherine December 21.

She took a picture and complained to the police. They informed her that, however tasteless the display, no crime had been committed. The dog was festooned with a Santa hat and a collar with bells. – WI.

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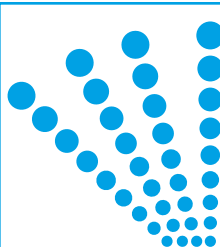
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RIP John Bridgman
John Bridgman, who served Westmount as a city councillor from 1991 to 1999, died January 9. He worked hard to raise funds for the renewal project of the Westmount Public Library. More details to follow next week.

**Henry Baer
of the M13A (under 13)
team is the city's
hockey player
of month!**
See p. 10

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Many parcels ‘rescued,’ taken to safety by PSOs

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Many Westmount residents took advantage of Public Security’s “special passing attention” (SPA) service over the holiday season, according to the department’s assistant director, Kimberley Colquhoun.

“The sergeant’s office looked like a mail-room,” she said, estimating about 85 parcels had been taken to safe-keeping after they had been left outside the front doors of residents who had gone away and informed Public Security. One was a bouquet of flowers.

While the number of residents who had signed up for the service this holiday period was not unusual, it was more than had been experienced during COVID restrictions, Colquhoun said.

Residents at any time of year who plan to be away are encouraged to notify Public Security so that passing patrollers can keep an eye out for suspicious activity or signs that people might be away such as items left at the door.

Woman falls, taken to hospital

An octogenarian Westmounter fell to the sidewalk of Prince Albert Ave. just north of de Maisonneuve the afternoon of

January 4. She was immediately helped by her friend, a friend of her friend and a passer-by. They counselled her to remain motionless and called 911.

Many pedestrians offered help as they passed the growing crowd, which eventually included two nearby residents, one of whom came with a blanket for her.

A Westmount Public Security officer stopped his vehicle when he noticed her on the ground and brought an additional blanket. He was soon joined by another patroller in his vehicle.

An ambulance arrived approximately 30 minutes later and took her to the Montreal General. – WI.

‘Missing’ man found asleep at pharmacy

A man was reported missing December 24 by his wife who had been expecting to pick him up outside a café on Greene Ave., Public Security officials said. Westmount Square, and Les 5 Saisons were included in a search for him until he was eventually located at the Jean Coutu pharmacy leaning against a wall in the magazine section.

Reportedly asleep, he stated he had gone inside to warm up. Described as aged in his 80s, the man was driven to his home nearby by the officer who found him.

Council grants request from 390 Prince Albert

Minor exemption allows front staircase to be rebuilt

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

City council granted a request December 19 for a minor exemption to the house at 390 Prince Albert to permit the reconstruction of an access staircase to the front door encroaching 10 feet into the building line, contrary to current zoning.

This results from an application to build a replacement staircase in the present location, which, in the past “we would have tolerated,” explained Urban Planning commissioner Conrad Peart. But granting the minor exemption would “legitimize” this encroachment into the public domain now that the city had adopted a by-law on minor exemptions in 2021.

In this case, Peart explained, everyone needs access to the front door and this was a “perfect” example of the need for a minor exemptions by-law.

Accordingly, under By-law 1576, such an exemption can only be granted if preventing it would cause “serious harm” to the person requesting it or, generally, hinder the enjoyment rights of neighbours or the environmental impact of the neighbourhood.

Canadian insouciance



This man was riding an electrically powered unicycle mid-snowstorm on December 16.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHAT ABOUT THE TREES NEAR THE TOBOGGAN RUN?



I'm a longtime resident of Westmount who enjoys our lovely Murray Hill Park year round.
Over the past couple of years, a program has been initiated to bring in snow ma-

chines to artificially create toboggan runs, for the general population's pleasure. I understand and agree with the objective.
What I don't understand is people undertaking this activity seem to be under

no monitoring or guidance from the city on creating and applying the snow. Apparently, no one has asked them to protect the trees.
As you may or may not be aware, if you do any construction in the city, the first thing Westmount will do is inspect the location and ensure that the trees are protected in and around the activity. Why isn't this happening in Murray Hill Park, especially with a tree protection and rejuvenation project under way in the park? It's crazy how much they are damaging the trees in the interest of creating a toboggan run that last for six to eight weeks.
I'm all for the activity, but what about the trees? Come spring, the snow will be gone, the grass will turn green, but the damage to the trees is forever.
BRUCE McMILLAN, ABERDEEN AVE.

THANKS FOR THE BENCHES

Thanks so much to Public Works for putting out some of the benches near bus stops for the winter. It means so much to me and other seniors to be able to sit and wait for a bus!

*

On another note, why are the library and greenhouse closed for one and a half weeks during the Christmas holidays? Montreal libraries and the Botanical Garden are open except for Christmas Day, New Year's Day and the day following. The Côte St. Luc library is open every day of the year.

If the indoor skating rink is open in Westmount, then the library and the greenhouse should be open.

Why can Westmount afford to keep the rink open but not the greenhouse and the library?

If Montreal can afford to do it, then we can too!

CLAIRE SALZBERG, CLAREMONT AVE.

PAY-AS-YOU-GO NOT SPENDING ENOUGH

Are Westmounters really expecting to see significant change in the lamentable physical state of our city? Well, forget it.
With escalating contractor prices, the

Additional information
Witt, Benloulou listed
9 Gordon Crescent

The Independent learned after press time that the listing real estate brokers for the most expensive Westmount house ever sold – 9 Gordon Crescent at \$23 million (December 13, 2022, p. 1) – were Michael Witt and Amy Benloulou. – DP.

2023 capital budget – which essentially covers water and sewers, roads, buildings, parks and Hydro Westmount – is set to decline in inflation-adjusted terms from the 2022 budget. So, we will be paying more for less. Our infrastructure deficit will keep growing.

How did we get here?

About 30 years ago, our city adopted a rigid policy of “pay as you go” for routine maintenance and infrastructure renewal. Borrowing was not to be considered except for major new projects such as the Westmount recreation centre. Westmount was viewed as a small, built city with sufficient property tax and other revenues to fund normal upkeep.

This approach might have worked if council had acknowledged the large scale of the work and made sure that enough money was provided to get it done. Instead, council dropped the ball. Everybody knows that routine maintenance, if not promptly carried out, quickly turns urgent with huge bills!

Also, for many decades, Westmount never generated enough property tax revenue for the required work. The city relies on revenue from property tax but has always maintained remarkably low tax rates. But ours is a residential community with few opportunities to generate other revenues.

Furthermore, not only did the city's rigid no-borrowing policy close off a ready source of funds, it contained significant risk. While described in tax letters as a “conservative” approach, it was not. It diminished the possibility of a shortage in labour and materials, soaring inflation, high interest rates, no bidders on occasion or a sole bidder asking an exorbitant price – all a description of the world we now live in.

Lastly, the city's Engineering and Public Works departments currently do not have the capacity to handle the challenge they now face. They are set up for a city of 30, 40 years ago that no longer exists.

There are several steps our council should take.

- 1. Build flexibility into our outdated financing policy. If the priority is to keep tax rates low, the alternative then is to borrow.
- 2. Rapidly expand the capabilities of Engineering and Public Works. Staff them up further.
- 3. Keep residents much better informed on what is going on and also importantly, what is not and why. While some projects are self-evident, others are scheduled each year, then pushed out or just vanish for some unknown reason like the renewal of Westmount Park.

Westmounters deserve continued on p. 7

WESTMOUNT INDEPENDENT
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

more than the “good enough” approach. We want to be proud of our city again.

DENIS BIRO, BURTON AVE.

COMMON SENSE ON SNOW REMOVAL, PLEASE



At 7 am this morning [January 13] – the sidewalk was uncleared, the street was partially cleared and the bike path was fully clear on de Maisonneuve. A parent and child and a dog-walker were walking in the street/bike path given sidewalk conditions.

Yes to active transportation, but priority to pedestrians, please. Can common sense prevail?

DON TADDEO, DE MAISONNEUVE BLVD.

THE WORST OF BILL 96 IS NOW HAPPENING

This press release was received by the Independent December 19

The news is emerging: the very worst expectations of Bill 96 are coming true. Task Force on Linguistic Policy President Andrew Caddell says, “We predicted when Bill 96 became law, the Office Québécois de la Langue Française would have *carte blanche* to act as it liked, in forcing this mean-spirited law on Quebec society. And

now it’s happening.”

Task Force Board member Moira Bell underlines, “This is not speculation, but information coming to us through impeccable sources. In the last few weeks, we have seen the OQLF overreaching by using the most egregious elements of Bill 96.”

Parents and students are scrambling to get English eligibility certificates from school boards due to new CEGEP requirements that did not exist before.

In Gatineau, the OQLF has been making unannounced visits to many businesses to assess their compliance with Bill 96 since September.

A business operator who hires through four separate Quebec corporations has been issued a ticket for non-compliance; the OQLF representative counted 26 employees on the premises. The employees were not all employees of the same business.

The OQLF has been accessing computers on premises, examining the language of correspondence, default language of computer programs, and the invoicing language.

Warnings and tickets being issued to business owners who issue invoices in English, or who complete online ordering in English when a French-language option is not available.

Task Force board member Joseph Cianflone says: “All these acts are shocking and unacceptable. Too many people are unaware of this disgraceful and mean-spirited law; the impact to business will be devastating. In the absence of political solutions, we have to fight it in the courts.”

The Task Force on Linguistic Policy is preparing a series of legal cases with the Bergman Law Firm to counter Bill 96 in seven key areas, including Canadians ineligible for English services; business-people affected by labour shortages; permanent residents who will no longer be eligible to receive communications in English; and English CEGEP students.

Andrew Caddell reiterated, “In order to fight this law, we need money. We are endeavoring to launch a massive campaign, and this will be costly. We need everyone willing to fight Bill 96 to give what they can. The easiest way to contribute is our Go Fund Me gofund.me/4ccdfd93. Or contact us at info@protegermesdroits.ca to contribute confidentially.”

Formed in June 2021 by a group of concerned citizens, the Task Force on Linguistic Policy/Comité spécial sur la politique linguistique boasts thousands of supporters. It is active in the community and has undertaken many successful interventions to fight intolerance in Quebec.

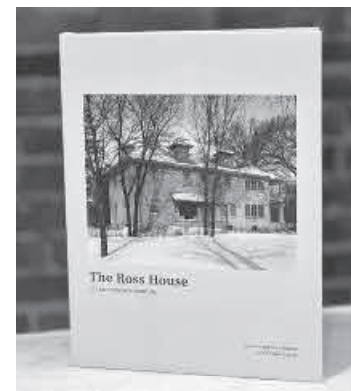
Stickiest snow ever?



This ring of sticky snow accumulated December 17 on the rim of a garbage can on York St.

PHOTO: INDEPENDENT.

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GUEST COLUMN

South Korea, Canada mark 60 years of diplomatic relations

By Dr. Jaewan Lee

In the Republic of Korea (ROK), it is tradition that one's 60th birthday has special meaning. When it was a poorer country and life expectancy was shorter, making it to six decades was a cause for celebration by family, friends, and even neighbours. Despite Koreans' prolonged life expectancy over time, the symbolism of reaching 60 still remains a meaningful moment.

In 2023, bilateral relations between the ROK and Canada will achieve such a significant milestone.

Many years, many facets

When Canadians think of Korea, they most likely think of its high-tech industry – represented by companies such as Samsung, LG and Hyundai, K-pop culture – led by the chart-topping BTS, the Oscar-winning film *Parasite* and the globally-viewed *Squid Game*.

However, there exists a deep and multi-faceted history between Korea and Canada, one that goes beyond the 60 years of government-to-government relations. They

can be categorized as belonging to the following four pillars: historic bonds, emotional affinity, new economic partnership and values-based cooperation.

ROK-Canada relations date back to the late 19th century, when a handful of Canadian missionaries made the long trek to the Korean peninsula, later translating many Korean words into English for the first time.

But it was during the middle of the 20th century with the onset of the Korean War that Canada and its people made their deepest mark on our country. Despite its smaller population, Canada dispatched the third largest force – nearly 27,000 soldiers – amongst United Nations participating countries in the war. Sadly, 516 Canadians died in action. Their sacrifice was not in vain, as they immeasurably contributed to the ROK's current freedom and prosperity, something the ROK and the Korean people have not – nor will ever – forget.

Large Korean diaspora in Canada

Emotional affinity constitutes another important pillar strengthening Korea-Canada relations. Despite different cultures

and geographical distances, Koreans and Canadians consider each other to be emotionally very close. In this regard, I would like to refer the presence of a considerable Korean diaspora in Canada – at well over 200,000 people, the fourth-largest in the world. The Korean community in Canada enables Koreans and Canadians to feel more familiar with each other. This is certainly true for Korean youth, as Canada is one of the most desirable destinations for them to take part in a Working Holiday program, allowing them to bolster their second-language skills and learn about new cultures.

Such historical bonds and emotional affinity are supported by the ROK and Canada's booming new economic partnership. Both countries can complement each other's economies through trade in manufacturing and raw materials, for example. The ROK and Canada can also support each other by cooperation in high-end sectors such as electric vehicle batteries, artificial intelligence, life sciences and aerospace. Just this past year, major announcements were made by Korean companies LG Energy Solution and POSCO Chemical to set up a \$5-billion battery plant in Windsor, Ontario and a \$500-million cathode facility in Bécancour, Quebec. With a memorandum of understanding on critical min-

erals reached during ROK president Yoon Suk Yeol's visit to Canada last fall, 2023 should see even more economic collaboration between our two countries.

Last but not least, I would like to put a strong emphasis on the fact that the ROK-Canada relationship, including the above pillars, is based on the shared values of democracy, freedom, human rights, diversity and social inclusiveness. These values do not exist in a vacuum – they are the result of longstanding and continuous cooperation between the ROK and Canada, and through our participation in multilateral fora and upholding the rules-based international order.

'Second' 60th

Personally, I am especially pleased to celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties between my country and my host countries for the second consecutive year, following my tenure as ambassador to Jordan. As the new consul general arriving in Montreal last month, it is my honour to contribute to the friendship between the ROK and both Canada and Quebec. I will play my part in ensuring that the ROK, Canada and Quebec's shared legacy can be passed on to future generations.

Westmounter Jaewan Lee is the consul general of South Korea in Montreal.

It's that time of year...



A lost boot on St. Catherine near Olivier Ave. on January 12.

PHOTO: VERONICA REDGRAVE.

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City's player of the month for November

Baer recognized for 'progress, hard work' in hockey

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Henry Baer, 12, has been named Westmount's player of the month for November by the Westmount Minor Hockey Association.

Playing on the city's M13A (under age 13) team, Henry started his hockey career with Westmount at age 5 in the M7 program.

"He has developed into a fantastic player," said Andrew Maislin, operations manager at the Westmount recreation centre.

In announcing the recognition, he said:

We welcome your letters

We welcome your letters but reserve the right to choose and edit them. Please limit to 300 words and submit before Friday 10 am to be considered for publication the following week.

Email us at:
editor@westmountindependent.com

"Seeing him progress the way he has over the year is amazing."

Henry was nominated by his coaches "based on his hard work, strong offence, defensive game and demonstration of leadership," Maislin explained. "I noted during the evaluations back in September that he is stronger, faster and more aware of what is going on on the ice. During the drills, he would turn on his 'beast mode' and just take off."

Although the team is struggling this year against very strong adversaries, he added that "owing to strong coaching leadership and player dedication," the team had improved "tremendously" over the course of the first half of the season.

"I look forward to seeing where they end up in March." Having Henry part of the minor hockey organization "is not only a moment of proudness but also a testament to the dedication of our families and players within our community to play sports."



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BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2+2 | MLS 15575761
Maurice Houle* 418.580.9120



TWO SUB-DIVIDED PRIVATE LOTS \$2,700,000
31 chemin de Senneville, Senneville
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 16187686
Louise Jackson* | Diane Stelmashuk*
Susanne Stelmashuk Chernin* 514.944.6066



NO REAR NEIGHBOURS \$2,455,555
22 rue de l'Andalou, Blainville
BEDS: 5 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 13198424
Jennifer Vienneau* 514.265.3669
Stéphane Larrivée* 514.809.8466



VICTORIAN STYLE \$2,249,000
15-17 rue Upper Edison, Saint-Lambert
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 1+2 | MLS 24804397
Zoë Vennes** 514.718.8004
Anne Marineau⁴ 514.231.8698



WATERFRONT ON LAC OUMET \$1,949,000
1050 chemin de Ste-Anne-des-Lacs, Sainte-Anne-des-Lacs
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 28133580
Melanie Clarke* 450.694.0678



HAMPSTEAD BEAUTY \$1,799,000
7 croissant Merton, Hampstead
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 12078517
Monique Assouline* 514.219.5897



TURNKEY TOWNHOUSE \$1,388,000
11 rue Langhorne, Hampstead
BEDS: 5 | BATHS: 4+1 | MLS 10425310
Laurie Tenenbaum* 514.248.7272



SOUGHT-AFTER LOCATION \$1,250,000
4695-4697 avenue Earncliffe, C.D.N./N.D.G.
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 1 | MLS 19585943
Cassandra Aurora** 514.293.2277



WATERFRONT PROPERTY \$1,050,000
7 rue Oscar-Murphy, Beauharnois
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 22610506
Vincent Chaput* 514.264.3555



COOPERATIVE HOUSING \$682,757*TXS
1471 avenue Roger-Lemelin, Sainte-Foy-Sillery
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 11121936
Martin Dostie* 418.956.8687



CLASSIC PROPERTY \$545,000
761 rue Doris, Louiseville
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 23550935
Marc Thibeault* 819.531.3266

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ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE \$7,300,000
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BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 5+2 | MLS 11493542

Susan Lloyd (Leduc)*

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INCREDIBLE VIEWS \$3,250,000
365 rue St-André, apt. 1501, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 19958247

Anne Ben-Ami (Madar)*

514.476.9700



RENOVATED UNIT AT THE PORT ROYAL \$2,995,000
1455 rue Sherbrooke Ouest, apt. 2402, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 4+1 | MLS 16227152

Saguy Elbaz*

514.892.7653



GOLDEN SQUARE MILE \$1,999,000
1200 boulevard de Maisonneuve Ouest, apt. 24B, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 15430895

Phyllis A. Tellier**

514.924.4062



WATERFRONT CONDO \$1,575,000
1010 rue de la Commune Est, apt. 202, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 11506470

Monica Genest*
Victoria Marinacci*

514.400.0280



INTRODUCING

UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW \$1,295,000
628 rue St-Jacques, apt. 2807, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 GARAGE: 1 | MLS 23331389

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INTRODUCING

DESIGNER PENTHOUSE WITH VIEWS \$1,100,000
199 rue de la Rotonde, PH 1-05, Île-des-Sœurs
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 27797994

Saul Ciecha*

514.941.6248

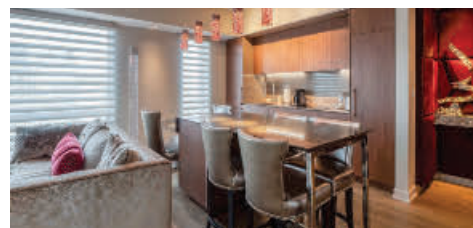


INTRODUCING

TOP FLOOR CONDO \$899,000
380 boulevard St-Joseph Est, Le Plateau-Mont-Royal
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 1+1 | MLS 21356809

Patrick Vaillant**

514.774.6917



BREATHTAKING VIEWS \$840,000
1288 avenue des Canadiens, apt. 4215, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 14542615

Lynne Leclair⁴

514.570.8998



NEW PRICE

ST-LAMBERT SUR LE GOLF \$799,000
587 chemin Tiffin, apt. 405, Saint-Lambert
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 28555685

L'Équipe Savaria
Christiane Savaria**

514.830.6415



INTRODUCING

PIGNORONDE RESORT \$785,000*TXS
750 boulevard Monseigneur-De Laval, apt. 402, Baie-Saint-Paul
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 10647977

Eric Gagnon⁴

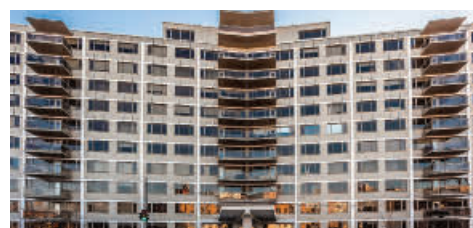
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SUPERB CONDOMINIUM \$618,000
6565 chemin Collins, apt. 810, Côte-Saint-Luc
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 10138069

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BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 19615390

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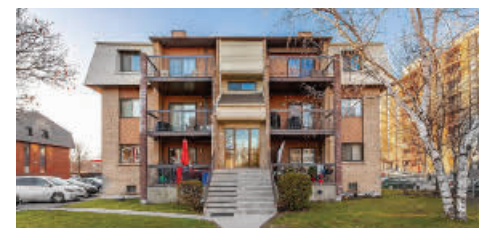


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SPECTACULAR CITY VIEWS \$498,000
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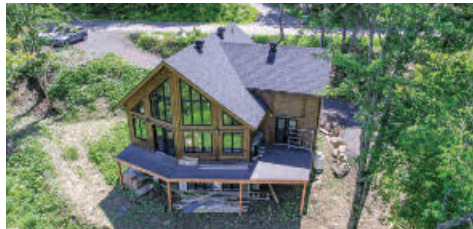
STUNNING WATERFRONT
57 chemin Davidson, Austin
BEDS: 6 | BATHS: 3+2 | MLS 15057515
Marie-Josée Rouleau* 514.660.6682



NEW ENGLAND-INSPIRED
325 chemin de Missisquoi, Bromont
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 2+2 | MLS 14678294
Marie-Piers Barsalou** 450.577.0272
Johanne Meunier* 514.926.5626



MAGOG RIVER
38 rue des Berges, Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley
BEDS: 5 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 22133477
Stéphane Cloutier* 819.578.7507
Andrée-Ann Cloutier* 819.452.1998



LUXURIOUS LOG CABIN
1513 chemin Kilpatrick, Saint-Sauveur
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 3 | MLS 24030844
Chantal Tardif* 514.532.0632



COTTAGE WITH LAKE ACCESS
2014 chemin du Lac-Quenouille, Val-des-Lacs
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 1+1 | MLS 18144007
Raymond Dalbec** 819.425.4568



LUXURIOUS CONDO RENTAL
3150 Place de Ramezay, apt. 202, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 19778138
Stefano Bizzotto* 514.962.3539



ELEGANT NDG RENTAL
3661 avenue Northcliffe, C.D.N./N.D.G.
BEDS: 4 | BATHS: 2+1 | MLS 22469230
Gabriel Pliva* 514.923.5383



LE CRYSTAL - FURNISHED RENTAL
1100 rue de la Montagne, apt. 1402, Ville-Marie
BEDS: 2 | BATHS: 2 | MLS 12839318
Louise Latreille* 514.577.2009

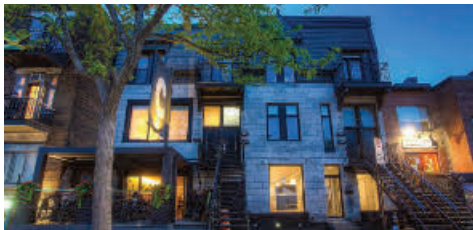
COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES



BUILDING - MIX ZONING
440 rue Ste-Hélène, Ville-Marie
MLS 27187670
Patricia Lallier** 514.239.1898



3-FLOOR COMMERCIAL BUILDING
2100 rue Crescent, Ville-Marie
7,038 FT.SQ. | MLS 20243658
Navid Changizi* 514.632.6912



REVENUE PROPERTY
4088-4092 rue St-Denis, Le Plateau-Mont-Royal
BEDS: 3 | BATHS: 3+1 | MLS 15057460
Brigitte Cohen* 514.963.5324



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Real Estate

ANDY DODGE

December sales: Rounding the bend?

Average adjusted price for 'typical' Westmount house, by month, January 2017 to December 2022, based on accepted offer dates



allowed for the adjusted average to climb slightly.

Latecomers were added to the October and November sales lists, changing those numbers slightly (October still has the distinction of posting no sale under \$2 million) but indicating there had been relatively little market movement through the late autumn months.

Sub-\$1-million listing first since early 2021

Various sellers took their houses off the

market over the holidays and have yet to re-list them, so there are only 83 houses on the market in mid-January compared to 99 listed a month earlier. One house now is listed under \$1 million, the first since one was briefly put on the market in September and then taken off without a sale. No houses sold in 2022 for less than \$1 million; in fact the last time a price was posted below \$1 million was in January 2021.

Volume remained strong in West-

mount's condominium market in the last quarter of 2022, when nine sales were posted (four of those in December), indicating an average price of \$878,167 and an average mark-up over valuation of 18.5 percent. The raw average sale price is the first time since the first quarter of 2020 that the average is less than \$1 million; only two of the sales in the fourth quarter were for prices over \$1 million, and one other was a bachelor apartment that sold for only \$280,000, whereas the entire year's next-lowest sale price was continued on p. 17

**Manoir Westmount**

A Project of The Rotary Club of Westmount



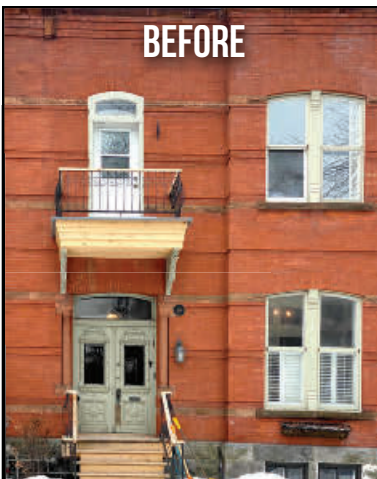
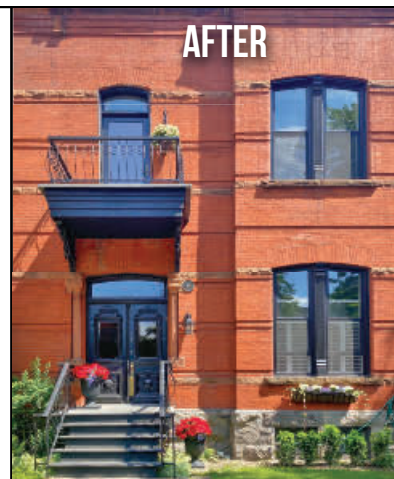
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infoWESTMOUNT

2023.01.17 • Vol. 4/01
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Published by the City of Westmount

NOUVELLES

PROCHAINE SÉANCE
DU CONSEIL

Lundi 6 février

NEWS

NEXT COUNCIL
MEETING

Monday, February 6



Piste de luge et patinoires

Profitez de la piste de luge du parc King George et des patinoires extérieures de Westmount. Les conditions quotidiennes des patinoires et toute fermeture temporaire seront affichées en ligne à westmount.org/patinoires.

Chargement de neige

Soyez très attentifs aux panneaux de signalisation temporaires interdisant le stationnement et déplacez votre véhicule avant l'arrivée des équipes de chargement. Les véhicules qui entravent les opérations de déneigement seront remorqués. Suivez l'avancement des opérations à westmount.org.

Emplois pour l'été 2023

Vous pouvez postuler d'ici le 31 janvier pour un emploi d'été à la Ville de Westmount. Visitez westmount.org pour la liste de postes disponibles et le formulaire d'application.

Inscriptions aux activités en cours

Inscrivez-vous à vos activités préférées de sports et de loisirs d'hiver. westmount.org.

Réduire sa consommation d'électricité en périodes de grands froids

Une forte demande est exercée sur le réseau d'Hydro Westmount lors de temps très froid, ce qui peut créer des surcharges et provoquer des pannes de courant. Lorsque la température atteint -18°C, svp évitez d'utiliser vos appareils énergivores pendant les heures de pointe, soit de 6 h à 9 h et de 16 h à 20 h.



Toboggan run and skating rinks

Make the most of the King George Park toboggan run, as well as Westmount's outdoor ice rinks. Daily rink conditions and temporary closures will be posted online at westmount.org/rinks.

Snow loading

Please watch for temporary signage indicating parking restrictions and move your vehicle accordingly in advance of the snow loading teams. Vehicles that interfere with snow operations will be towed. Follow the progress of the snow removal operations at westmount.org.

2023 summer employment

You can apply for a summer job at the City of Westmount anytime up to January 31st. Visit westmount.org for the list of positions available and the application form.

Activity registration now underway

Sign up now for your favourite winter sports and recreation activities. westmount.org.

Reduce your electricity consumption during very cold weather

Frigid winter weather increases the demand on Hydro Westmount's electrical grid, potentially leading to overloaded circuits and power interruptions. On days when the temperature drops below -18°C, please avoid using energy-intensive appliances during the peak periods of 6 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 8 p.m.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ÉVÉNEMENTS COMMUNAUTAIRES



Concours littéraire McEntyre

Vous êtes élève du primaire ou du secondaire à Westmount? Participez au Concours littéraire McEntyre 2023 en écrivant une histoire, un poème ou un essai sur le thème de l'exploration. Visitez westlib.org pour plus d'informations.

Série Récits de voyage

Les mardis ou les vendredis à partir du 17 janvier, Bibliothèque. Une activité hebdomadaire pour les individus atteints de la maladie d'Alzheimer ou autre forme de démence. westlib.org.

Heures de conte à la Bibliothèque

Soyez des nôtres pour *bébé comptines* (6-18 mois), *les tout-petits contes* (18 mois-3 ans) ou *conte et bricolage* (2-4 ans et 4-6 ans) à partir du 25 janvier. westlib.org.

Exposition solo : Fung Sou

Jusqu'au 10 février, Galerie du Victoria Hall.

Atelier de bricolage – L'hiver (7 à 12 ans)

Jeudi 19 janvier, 16 h, Bibliothèque. Inscription requise. westlib.org

Musique au gré des saisons (1-5 ans)

Samedi 21 janvier, 11 h, Bibliothèque. Retrouvez Alison Notkin pour un cours de musique amusant inspiré de l'hiver. Inscrivez-vous : westlib.org.

Ciné-club : Petite Maman (2021)

Mardi 24 janvier, 14 h, Victoria Hall. Réalisé par Céline Sciamma. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

Club de STEAM (9 à 12 ans)

Jeudi 26 janvier, 16 h, Bibliothèque. Avec Dawn of Imagination. Inscrivez-vous à westlib.org.

Projection spéciale : Wait Until Dark (1967)

Samedi 28 janvier, 19 h, Victoria Hall. Thriller de Terence Young, avec Audrey Hepburn, Alan Arkin et Richard Crenna. Inscrivez-vous sur Eventbrite.

LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS



McEntyre Writing Competition

Are you an elementary or secondary school student in Westmount? Take part in the 2023 McEntyre Writing Competition: write a story, a poem or an essay on the theme of *Exploration*. Visit westlib.org for more information.

Tales & Travels Series

Tuesdays or Fridays from January 17, Library. A weekly activity for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. westlib.org.

Storytime at the Library

Join us for *Books for babies* (6-18 mos), *Tales for Toddlers* (18 mos-3yrs), or *Storytime & Craft* (2-4 yrs & 4-6 yrs), from January 25. westlib.org

Solo exhibition: Fung Sou

Until February 10, Gallery at Victoria Hall.

Craft Workshop – Winter (7-12 yrs)

Thursday, January 19, 4 p.m., Library. Registration required. westlib.org

Music by the Season 1-5 yrs

Saturday, January 21, 11 a.m., Library. Join Alison Notkin for this fun and cozy winter-inspired music class. Register at westlib.org.

Film Club: Petite Maman (2021)

Tuesday, January 24, 2 p.m., Victoria Hall. Directed by Céline Sciamma. Register on Eventbrite.

STEAM Club (9-12 yrs)

Thursday, January 26, 4 p.m., Library. With Dawn of Imagination. Register at westlib.org.

Film Screening : Wait Until Dark (1967)

Saturday, January 28, 7 p.m., Victoria Hall. A thriller by Terence Young, starring Audrey Hepburn, Alan Arkin and Richard Crenna. Register on Eventbrite.



Police Report

Two break-ins and a mischief incident over New Year's

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

While the Christmas season in Westmount was relatively crime-free, a few break-ins and a mischief incident over the New Year's Day weekend kept investigators at the Montreal police's Station 12 busy.

Staff at the Stanton St. station received a call regarding a forced entry and burglary at a residence on Dorchester Blvd. sometime between 2 pm on December 31 and 1 pm on New Year's Day.

The dwelling's occupant, a tenant, reported upon arriving home after nearly a day away that certain objects were missing from the household.

Investigators found that the perpetrator had made his way in through an inadequately-secured side window. They found fingerprints on the window as well as inside the house.

According to Station 12 community relations officer Cst. Adalbert Pimentel, the

investigators have identified a "person of interest" in the dossier, although they were not yet certain whether this person might be considered a suspect.

Burglary by non-relative

There was a second burglary on December 31, this time around 10:30 am. However, it was only reported to Station 12 on January 3.

In this incident, a unit in a residential building on de Maisonneuve Blvd. near Redfern Ave. was entered by a suspect through an unlocked apartment door.

The tenant told investigators he had gone out for around 30 minutes. Acknowledging to police that he left the apartment door unlocked, he said he found it odd after returning that the door was now locked.

It was only the day after this that he realized an item of personal property, a piece of jewellery, was missing.

Before leaving the building, a suspect, whose movements were captured by security cameras, identified himself to a doorman at the front entrance as a member of the tenant's family.

According to the police report, he asked the doorman to lock up the apartment, maintaining that he didn't have a key.

The doorman told the investigators that the suspect then drove off in a vehicle. After viewing the security camera images, the tenant said he didn't recognize the suspect and insisted he was not a relative.

Car damage

Finally, a de Maisonneuve Blvd. resident filed a complaint with police about damage inflicted on his car around half past midnight on January 2 by several male suspects.

After hearing some commotion outside where the car was parked in a spot in the back yard, he went outdoors to see, but saw

nothing.

However, on his home's video camera security system, he spotted three individuals trespassing on his property.

Later, he determined that the car had sustained damage to the hood and windshield. The suspects were described as wearing hoodies.

December real estate cont'd from p. 15

\$657,000.

All of the condos sold in the fourth quarter were in apartment buildings; none were converted duplexes or triplexes.

House rental listings dropped from 33 to 27, though three new rental contracts were negotiated in December, an indication that market might be picking up steam early in the year. Among house rentals, the range for 2022 was between \$3,210 and \$14,000 per month, and those now on the market are asking between \$4,200 and \$15,000 per month.

Are things back to normal?



2021



2022



2023

Remember lining up to get into the Metro grocery store on Victoria Ave.? We do and we photographed an instance of it on January 4, 2021. Legal capacity limits were still in place exactly one year later, but there was no line-up. This year – on the same day – things were like they have been for decades. No line-up. No capacity limit. No mandatory masks.

PHOTOS: INDEPENDENT.

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Sorting the donations stacked in the city’s former municipal court on December 14 are, from left: Jean Shettler, Margot Prince, Sally Rioux and Maureen McCrory of the Contactivity Centre’s Busy Bees group with PSO Marie-Ève Parent (top right).

Large effort provides food baskets for 45 families

PSU drive raises \$4,600 in cash donations from many sources

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

Public Security’s holiday food drive provided 45 baskets – and more – of non-perishable food along with hams, turkeys, cooked chickens and grocery gift cards delivered starting December 19. In at least one case, a recipient with special needs received several days’ worth of ready-to-eat meals.

In reporting this year’s donations, Public Security’s assistant director Kimberley Colquhoun, who organizes the annual drive, said one recipient made a special request. This was that his basket be given instead to a woman in a neighbouring apartment whom he felt had a greater need.

Along with the donation of food, the drive also raised a total of \$4,600 for the purchase of the fresh items and food coupons.

The many donations came from the

Westmount Artisans’ annual sale in November along with special collections outside Metro and Les 5 Saisons grocery stores, front porches, bins in municipal buildings and a separate food drive by the Westmount Lawn Bowling and Croquet Club, all as previously reported.

Employees hold individual fundraisers

In addition, \$140 was raised from an annual sale of scones for city employees made by Maureen Lafrenière of the city’s Communications division while another \$130 came from chili prepared by PSO Marie-Ève Parent and handed out in containers at lunch to city workers.

A few remaining turkeys and hams and some other food was given to the Resilience shelter at Cabot Square while some non-perishable food and baby products were given to Elizabeth House, a home for young mothers, Colquhoun said.



Some of the non-perishable food.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WESTMOUNT PUBLIC SECURITY.

Bass exhibits in Milan, Italy



Retail Review
VERONICA REDGRAVE

Gloria Bass recently premiered her latest jewellery creations in Milan. The designer was chosen by the organizers of the Milano Jewelry Week.

The Gloria Bass Design exhibit glowed beside famed Italian favourites Leo Pizzo, Antonini and Alessio Boschi. Bass’ uniquely identifiable gold coiling techniques and diverse palette of gemstone colours attracted an appreciative crowd.

Her tourmaline collection was the “biggest draw of the show,” she proudly recounted.

A household name for those who appreciate special stones in special settings, Bass started slowly, and – like jewellers of the Renaissance – she apprenticed for many years.

Today, celebrating 30 years on Greene Ave., she offers a mouth-watering array of

gorgeous pieces. Because of her years collecting gems, she offers “quality and diversity.”

One of her best-selling pieces is her “stacking rings,” which can be all diamonds, or mixed with stones such as emeralds. She is famous for her wrap-lariat, which can be worn many ways: a look now noted on red carpet runways.

I admired pink sapphires, semi-precious labradorite, watermelon tourmalines and shimmering party-ready zircons. Bass also does custom work “upcycling” heritage and vintage pieces.

Recently, an 18-year-old brought in “old family diamonds that had been in a safety box.” Today she wears these sparklers as stacking rings: on each finger.

Next for this Westmount personality? The Florence Biennale in 2023. Her creative craftsmanship has reached the international stage. And it’s a family business. Her daughter Jennifer handles social media and her son-in-law Richard Jakoblw is operations manager.

GLORIA BASS DESIGN
1361 Greene Ave.
Gloriabassdesign.com



Gloria Bass.

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Sewing Machine for Sale

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Cities should be 'de-politicized,' former mayor Trent tells Rotarians

BY MARTIN C. BARRY

Although it's been more than five years since former Westmount mayor Peter Trent left office, he still speaks with disdain about megacities.

Peter Trent was first elected an alderman on Westmount city council in 1983. He served as Westmount's mayor from 1992 until 2001, when Westmount was forcibly merged with the city of Montreal.

While Westmount succeeded in demerging in 2006, Trent did not return as mayor until 2009.

In an address last week to the Westmount Rotarians, who were meeting at Victoria Hall for the first time since the onset of the COVID pandemic three years ago, Trent asked whether the 21st anniversary of the Montreal megacity is something worth celebrating.

He said that what Montreal needs now is "a changing of the guard" at the political level.

"Municipal taxes are not right-wing or left-wing," he said, implying that the ideological divisions that often create factions on city councils draw attention away from the actual purpose of municipal government.

Trent said that "if we could ever de-politicize the whole municipal apparatus," then there would be a chance of getting municipal property and business taxes under control.

Trent noted that 40 years ago, the population on the island of Montreal was two million. Today, the population is still two

million.

"And yet, the entire metropolitan region has increased to 4.4 million," he said, noting that the trend has been for young families to migrate to the suburbs north of Montreal where property taxes are much lower.

\$400 million more – per year

Although the provincial government's underlying rationale for creating the Montreal megacity was to save money from "economies of scale," Trent contended the concept has actually cost \$400 million extra every year.

He said a significant amount of this increase resulted from having to pay higher salaries to employees in merged suburbs, because their remuneration had to be harmonized with the higher pay already being

paid to city of Montreal workers.

He also maintained that in the 21 years that have passed since the creation of the megacity, the remaining boroughs, which were initially responsible for 57 per cent of local costs, have seen the figure drop to 43 percent.

"Those of us who decided to demerge, we happen to control 100 percent of our local spending and our capital spending," said Trent, while adding that he could never have built the new Westmount recreation centre had Westmount been bound in red tape by the megacity.

"We raised \$6 million to reduce taxes to citizens," he said, noting that the project was also delivered on time and on budget, while "Montreal can't deliver anything" on time and on budget.

Davicci store closed by start of new year

BY JENNIFER BALL

Davicci sells leather goods, shoes, jewelry and accessories but the start of the new year revealed an emptied-out store in the Westmount Square shopping concourse.

The information agent at the Westmount Square kiosk believes the store may have moved locations but no sign was placed in the storefront window indicating a new location. The phone number that was associated with the business is no longer in service.

Incorporated in August 1999 by David Bouzaglo – the owner of Davicci at 560-1, Westmount Square – the enterprise is in discussion with G. Bill Hafner, CIRP, Licensed Insolvency Trustee. No intention of liquidation or dissolution has been declared.

Hafner is a professional financial advisor and licensed insolvency trustee who has been providing assistance to clients in personal and business insolvency situations since 2002. He is administrator for the business.

According to the statement of information of a legal person in the business register, Bouzaglo voluntarily delisted the business last September.



A ghost of retail past: the logo of the SAQ, a former tenant in the same space until 2011 (see March 22, 2011, p. 1), was visible on the glass wall of the former Davicci location in Westmount Square January 12.

We welcome your letters

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Budget, cont'd from p. 1

hike of 6.4 percent for the average single-family dwelling – the largest category of taxpayers – which Mayor Christina Smith described as “slightly below” the inflation rate.

Tax rates per \$100 of property valuation for various categories were set at 0.6081 for owners of dwellings of 5 units or less, 0.6162 for residential properties of over 5 units (such as apartment buildings) and 2.6731 for the non-residential category.

The first installment of taxes will be due February 24 and the second on May 26.

Local and island-wide

Required by provincial law to be balanced, the budget includes locally controlled expenditures such as departmental costs, remuneration, a pay-as-you-go amount for the city’s capital expenditures budget and the surplus appropriation – for a total of \$60.8 million.

Agglo, MMC

Added to this is \$67.1 million to be paid to the Montreal agglomeration (the “agglo”) for the city’s portion of island-wide shared services such as fire, police and transit representing about half of the city’s budget, with another \$1.3 million going to the regional Montreal Metropolitan Community (MMC).



9 Lives

LYSANNE FOWLER

Beautiful, stunning Coquette.

Such a sleek white shorthair with gorgeous pink nose and toes, not mentioning her breathtaking blue eyes.

Dear Coquette is not only pretty as can be, but affectionate as can be.

A cuddly 10-year-old, she is presently at the Montreal SPCA cattery where, upon her veterinary examination, she was diagnosed with diabetes. She is now on her specific maintenance food and a twice-a-day insulin dose, which she accepts very well.

As she is a senior, Coquette is available for adoption under the humanitarian adoption category, with a reduced fee. If you would like more information on her, please go to the Montreal SPCA website at www.sPCA.com, scroll to her information page from her identification number, 49277310, and head to the upper right-hand side “Fill out the form” rectangle to click and provide your contact information to the coordinators. They will contact you to answer your questions about Coquette and

Details of revenues and expenditures listed in city’s operating budget

By LAUREEN SWEENEY

In presenting the city’s overall 2023 operating budget, both Mayor Christina Smith and Councillor Antonio D’Amico, as finance commissioner, explained the increasing amounts the city has earmarked as needed for its own operation to maintain infrastructure, provide “the highest quality” services and increase material as well as structural and human resources.

“For example,” D’Amico said, “the cost of renting a wheel loader for snow removal has increased by 64 percent compared to last year, the cost of line painting...by 49 percent and the cost of diesel fuel by 81 percent since 2021.”

Expenditures

To meet some of these changes, the city has increased its local departmental expenses by 25.4 percent (\$19.5 million) to beef up, in particular: Communications (up 96 percent) to \$97,200, Human Resources (up 37.2 percent) to \$425,000, and Information Technology (up 65.4 percent) to \$1.5 million.

Public Works, the largest department, is budgetted to need \$11.9 million (up 19 percent), Engineering, \$370,700 (up 243 percent), Urban Planning \$715,900 (up 189 percent) and City Clerk/Legal Services \$1.2 million (up 67.2 percent).

In all cases, remuneration is not included in these amounts but is budgetted separately at \$29.1 million, up 8.1 percent.

Other local costs include pay-as-you-go for the capital works budget as well as costs related to an actuarial deficit in the city’s pension fund “primarily due to declining returns in financial markets.” These pension costs will jump 71 percent from \$1.4 million to \$2.5 million.

When the pay-as-you-go is removed from local expenditures as being a capital rather than operating cost, the increase in operating costs would actually be 16 percent rather than 12.8 percent.

The total of these local expenditures is \$73.4 million before a surplus appropriation of \$12.5 million.

Added to the expenditure budget is \$67.6 million payable to the agglomeration for island-wide services (a variation up .2 percent) and \$1.3 million (up 5.6 percent)

to the regional Montreal Metropolitan Community (MMC).

Revenues

The total amount of municipal revenue to fund the \$129.5 million of expenditures is listed at \$132.3 million before Hydro Westmount’s net loss of \$2.7 million is deducted.

Its main source of revenue is property tax amounting to \$102.0 million (up 4.4 percent) along with transfer duties (the “welcome tax” on real estate sales) projected to rise 49.4 percent to \$12.7 million and \$3.6 million from government properties “in lieu” of taxes.

Other sources of revenue are listed as those from parking meters and permits of \$3.2 million (down 3.9 percent), tickets and fines of \$1.9 million (up 10.9 percent), interest of \$2.8 million (up 384.2), government grants of \$2.4 million (up 17.2 percent) and recreation activities of \$1.4 million (up 6.2 percent).

Details of the operating budget can be found by searching Finances and Budgets/ municipal budget on the home page of the city’s website.

Lovely Coquette

conduct a pre-screening interview for adoption. So precious, Coquette is a loving companion, please reach out to make her part of your family.

Your neighbour,
Lysanne



*Westmount
A-dog-tions*

LYSANNE FOWLER

We are starting our New Year on the right paw, a big black dog adoption!

A sweet black Labrador mix with artistic white patches on her chest and tiptoe, Berta is a sporting and affectionate girlie. She is presently at the Montreal SPCA kennel, a bright and playful three-year-old with a lot of energy and interest in bonding with a family.

Berta is very healthy, up to date with her inoculations, spayed and microchipped. She is content as an only dog in the home and has not yet met cats.

If you would like more information on Berta, please go to the www.sPCA.com website and scroll to Berta’s information page using her identification number, 51789599. Then the next step is to click on the “Fill out the form” rectangle and add in your contact information for the coordinators to contact you for a pre-screening interview to discuss adoption. Berta will fit in very easily with our active Westmount dogs on the go, so many things for them to do!

Your neighbour, Lysanne

Precious Berta



Vilebrequin keeps things hot, and cool



Retail Review

VERONICA REDGRAVE

Recently, a chorus of colours broke the mood of winter's snowy scrim.

Vilebrequin premiered its Cruise-Spring-Summer 2023 line. (The fashion industry traditionally shows seasonal collections six months in advance.) The French luxury swimwear brand is famous for its fabulous prints.

And for the upcoming season matching sets have a new look. Father-and-son and mother-daughter outfits are universally charming, with a wider range launched for the season.

Proving the point was the happy departure of a father and his young son who had just bought matching swim trunks sets as they were about to leave for a sunnier clime.

Ladies' new beachwear – long skirts that flow in warm winds – are, as always, unique and flattering. Vilebrequin designs are discernable – and admired – from yards away. This season there are even more ac-



Cheryl Glense.

cessories, ranging from large sun-banning hats to totes and water-soaking towels.

The other news, owner Cheryl Glense explained, was the launch of the Vilebrequin Winter line. Sipping bubbly on a chilly eve, it was a pleasure to cuddle up to

the warmth of the new ski sweaters, while I keep my dreams of breeze-blown garments for warmer days. Maybe then my prints will come.

(Sorry. Couldn't resist.)

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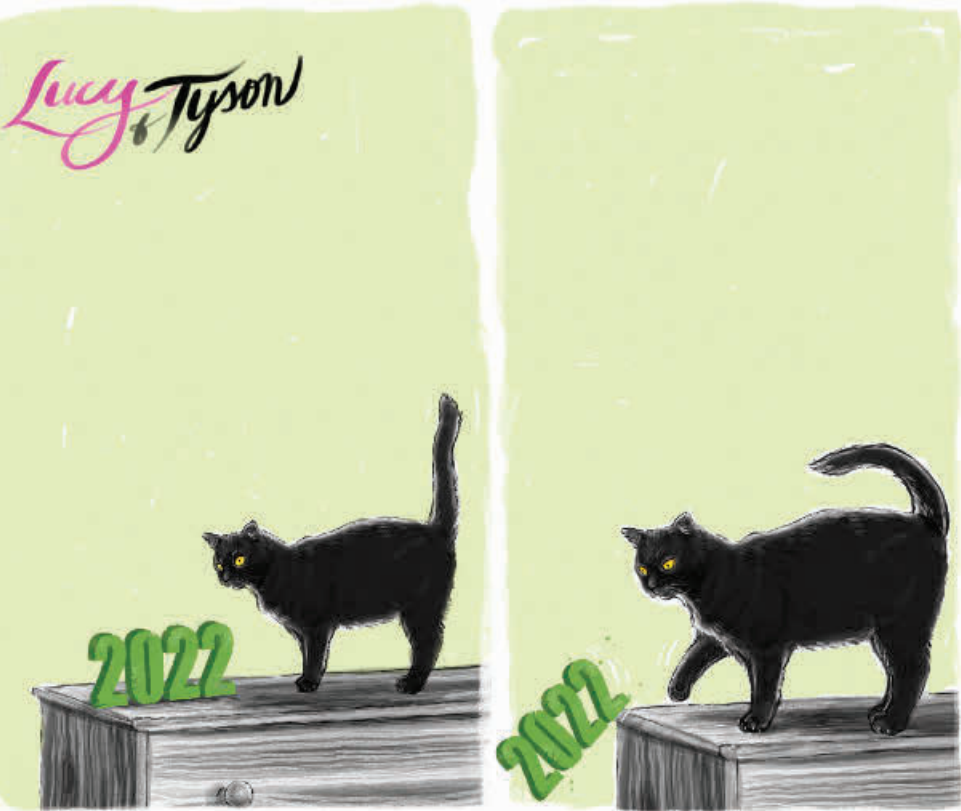
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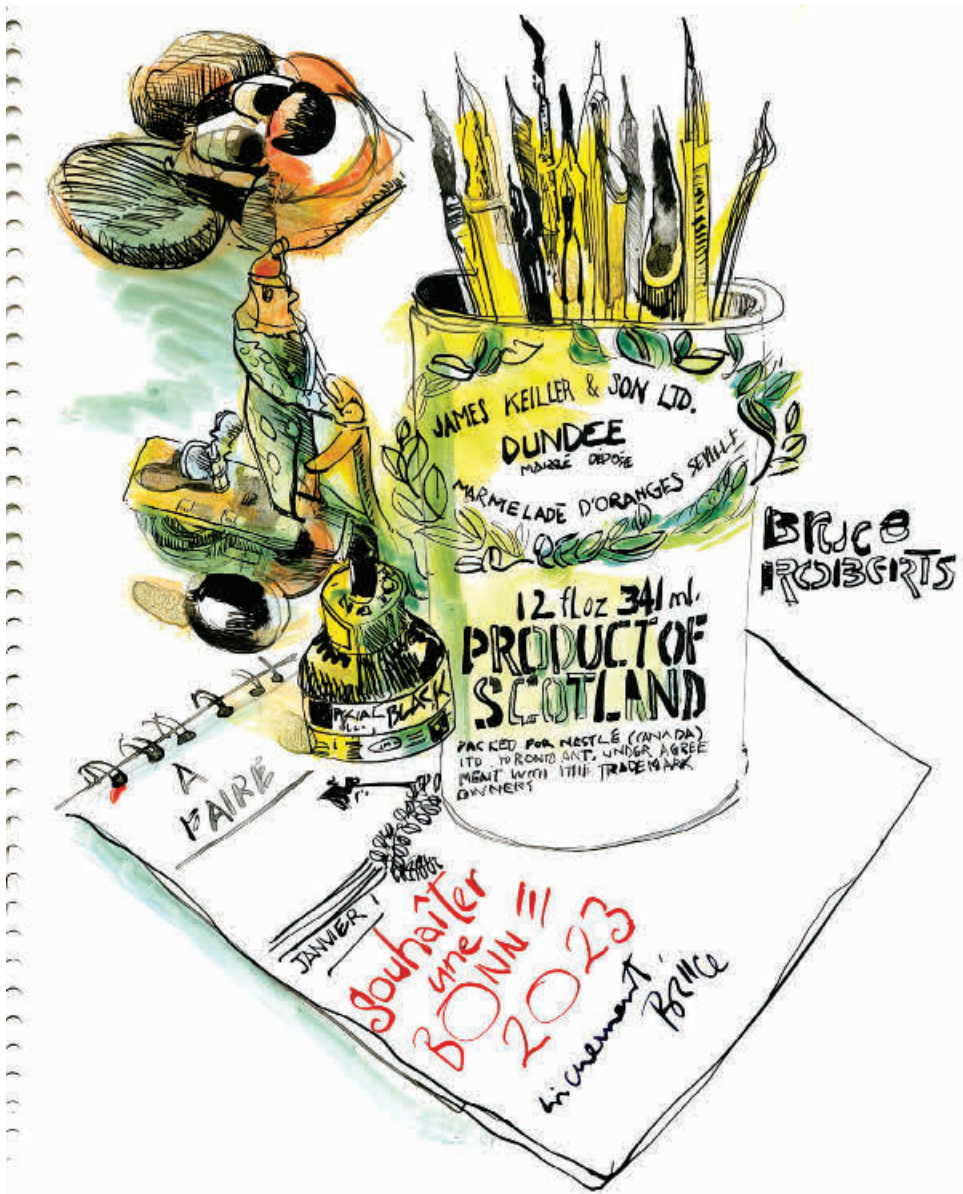
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Taddeo named to Order of Canada

Westmounter Donat Taddeo has been named to the Order of Canada as a member, “For his significant contributions to his community and to educational institutions as a teacher, development leader, administrator and volunteer,” according to the December citation.

Mike Piperni elaborated in an email to the *Independent*, listing his roles, including dean of the humanities division in Concordia’s faculty of arts and science, dean of its faculty of engineering, executive vice-chair of its capital campaign and associate professor in the department of communication studies.

“He has also achieved significant accomplishments on the humanitarian level. In 2015, he accompanied a Syrian family upon their arrival from the war-torn country,” continued Piperni. “He guided the family of six, helping them with employment and

educational opportunities.”

Taddeo also served as Quebec’s delegate in Italy, was CEO of the McGill University Health Centre Foundation, chair of Ascension of Our Lord parish’s capital campaign committee and currently serves as assistant to the president, planning and development, at Loyola High School in NDG.

He was profiled in the *Independent* of November 6, 2012 (p. 27).

Piperni summarized: “His tireless efforts, dedication and passion make him a true community leader and a worthy recipient of this prestigious honour.”

We welcome your letters

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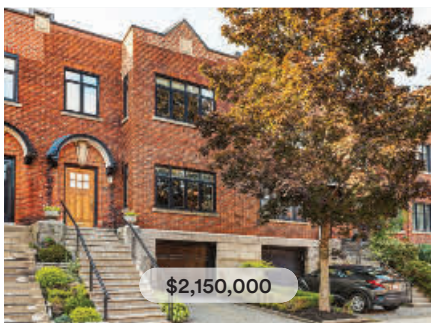
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